



**ELECTRONIC PEN HELP FEEDBACK  
AND INFORMATION RETRIEVAL**

**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION**

The present application for patent is related to and hereby claims priority from and incorporates by reference the subject matter disclosed in U.S. Patent Application

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10 09/703,326; and U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial  
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## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

### Technical Field of the Invention

5       The present invention relates in general to the  
communications field, and in particular to an interaction  
of an electronic reading device with an address pattern.

### Description of Related Art

10       Numerous devices exist for accepting user input and  
controlling user interaction with desktop and portable  
computers, personal digital assistance (PDAs), mobile  
phones, and other types of electronic devices. For  
example, a keyboard can be used to accept typed input and  
other types of commands, a mouse or a track-ball can be  
15       used to provide relative motion input as well as various  
types of point-and-click selections, a keypad can be used  
to provide input of numerical data and functional  
commands, navigational keys can be used for scrolling  
lists or otherwise repositioning a cursor, and various  
20       types of touchpads or touchscreens can be used to provide  
absolute positional coordinate inputs. Each type of

mechanism for accepting input and for supporting user  
interaction has benefits and disadvantages in terms of  
size, convenience, flexibility, responsiveness, and easy  
of use. Generally, the selection of a particular type of  
5 input mechanism is dependent upon the function of the  
application and the degree and type of interaction  
required.

With the ever expanding capabilities and availability  
of applications both on the Internet and the area of  
10 wireless technology, there continues to be a need to  
develop and provide new mechanisms for accepting input and  
interacting with users. In particular, some of the  
existing technologies suffer from drawbacks or  
limitations, such as size and flexibility, that make them  
15 impractical and/or inconvenient to use in some situations.  
By expanding the range of mechanisms for supporting user  
interaction, application developers and end-users can have  
greater flexibility in the selection of input devices.  
Preferably, any such new mechanisms will provide increased  
20 flexibility and will maximize user convenience. In  
addition, the development of new mechanisms for  
interacting with users can expand the realm of potential  
applications.

For example, while a keyboard typically provides a great deal of flexibility, particularly when it is used in connection with a mouse, a touchscreen, or other navigational device, its size makes it inconvenient in many cases, especially in the wireless context.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention comprises a method and system for displaying feedback in connection with the use of an electronic reading device. The system includes an electronic reading device for detecting portions of an address pattern on a formatted surface and a separate electronic device that includes a display screen. The separate electronic device is used to display feedback relating to the detected portions of the address pattern. The feedback can include, for example, a textual representation of information written using the electronic reading device, help information for an application associated with the address pattern, or other information associated with a detected portion of the address pattern.

In accordance with the method of the invention, portions of an address pattern are detected with an electronic reading device. Information relating to the

detected portions of the address pattern are sent to an  
electronic display device, and the information is  
converted into feedback relating to the detected portions  
of the address pattern. Finally, the feedback is  
5 displayed on the electronic display device.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding of the present  
invention, reference is made to the following detailed  
description taken in conjunction with the accompanying  
10 drawings wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a block diagram of a system in which an  
electronic pen can be used as an input device;

FIGURE 2 is a schematic diagram of a system for  
supporting use of the electronic pen described in  
15 connection with FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 3 is an illustration of the protocol stacks  
that can be used in the case of local communications  
between an electronic pen and an electronic pen client;

FIGURE 4 is an illustration of protocol stacks that  
20 can be used when an electronic pen and an electronic pen  
client communicate with one another via an Internet  
connection;

FIGURE 5 is an illustration of a protocol stack for communications between an electronic pen client and each of the supporting entities when the electronic pen client is not located within a server on the Internet;

5       FIGURE 6 is an illustration of protocol stacks that are used for communications between an electronic pen client and each of the supporting entities when the electronic pen client is located on the Internet;

10       FIGURE 7 is a block diagram of the electronic pen logic that handles positions, strokes, actions, and grid descriptions;

FIGURE 8 is a block diagram of a state machine for the electronic pen control block shown in FIGURE 7;

15       FIGURE 9 is a block diagram of a state machine for an electronic pen client;

FIGURES 10A-10C are a message flow and signaling diagram illustrating the operation of the electronic pen system shown and discussed in connection with FIGURE 2; and

20       DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a system in which an electronic reading device, such as an electronic pen, an

electronic mouse, or a hand scanner, works in cooperation with an address pattern (e.g., a specially formatted paper) to provide for a detection of a location of the electronic reading device over the address pattern. For instance, a pattern of dots can be defined such that, by examining a very small portion of the pattern, a precise location in the overall pattern can be determined. In fact, it is possible to define a pattern that has the size of 73,000,000,000,000 A4 pages, which is equivalent to half the size of the entire United States. Portions of the pattern can be placed on sheets of paper or other objects.

Then, using an electronic scanner pen that can detect the dots in the pattern, it is possible to detect the location of the pen with respect to the unique pattern. For example, when such a pen is used in connection with a specially formatted paper, the pen can detect its position (e.g., using a built in camera) by detecting a 3 mm by 3 mm portion of the pattern. By taking approximately 100 pictures per second, the pen is capable of determining its exact position to within 0.1 mm or less. This system can be used to provide user input, to facilitate user interaction, or to store handwritten notes or drawings. Moreover, by associating portions of the overall pattern

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with certain applications, such a system can be used to interact with wide variety of applications.

Referring now to FIGURE 1, there is illustrated an example of a system 2 in which an electronic pen 10 can be used as an input device. The electronic pen 10 includes an ink cartridge and is capable of writing in a typical fashion. The electronic pen 10, however, includes some type of sensor (e.g., a built-in camera) that is used for detecting an address pattern on a specially formatted piece of paper 12. In particular, the paper 12 is formatted with a small portion of a large address pattern such that when the electronic pen 10 is used to write on or otherwise make marks on the paper 12, the writings or markings can be electronically detected and stored.

As an example, the paper 12 might constitute a form that can be used for sending an email. Thus, the paper 12 might include a space for writing in the email address of an intended recipient, a space for writing a subject of the email, and a space for writing the body of the email. As the electronic pen 10 is used to fill in each of the spaces, the position and movement of the electronic pen 10 on the paper 12 can be determined by repeatedly detecting the current x, y coordinates of the pen 10 (e.g., at rate

of 100 frames per second). The markings can then be converted into ASCII text using an appropriate handwriting recognition program. Once the user completes the form, the email can be sent, for example, by checking a send box  
5 at a predetermined location on the paper 12.

Preferably, the coordinate information collected by the pen 10 is sent by a short range radio transmitter in the electronic pen 10 to a nearby mobile station 14 using a short range radio interface 16 such as a local wireless  
10 radio link (e.g., a local wireless radio link, such as that is supported by Ericsson's Bluetooth™ wireless communications technology). Alternatively, instead of using a mobile station 14, the coordinate information could also be sent to, for instance, a desktop or portable  
15 computer, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a television, or a Bluetooth terminal. Moreover, instead of using a local wireless radio link, other types of local wireless links, such as inductive coupling and infrared light; other types of radio links, such as Global System  
20 for Mobile Communication (GSM); or wired transmission media, such as a cable can also be used. The information can then be forwarded via an appropriate link, such as a

cellular air interface 18, to a base station 20 or other network node.

Referring now to FIGURE 2, there is illustrated a schematic diagram of a system 2 for supporting use of the electronic pen 10 described in connection with FIGURE 1. Throughout the subsequent discussion, the system 2 is described primarily in connection with an electronic pen 10. It will be understood, however, that the invention and the underlying system 2 can instead use any type of electronic reading device, such as an electronic pen, an electronic mouse, or a hand scanner. As shown in FIGURE 2, the system 2 includes six different entities, including the electronic pen 10, electronic pen client 22, a control node 24, a name server 26, a base translator 28, and an application server 30. Although these various devices are described and depicted separately, it is also possible to combine two or more of the entities into the same device (e.g., the electronic pen 10 and electronic pen client 22 can be contained in the same device).

The electronic pen 10 is responsible for detecting positions on the address pattern, producing actions, and sending information to the electronic pen client 22. In addition to being able to leave pen markings, some

electronic pens can also have the ability to produce other types of output, such as sound, vibration, or flashing lights. The electronic pen 10 includes a memory for storing a current grid, which comprises information relating to an area of the address pattern that is near the most recently detected position of the electronic pen 10. When the electronic pen 10 is loaded with the current grid, it knows what actions to take based on the positions that are read from the address pattern. When the electronic pen 10 is first turned on or when it moves to an area outside of the current grid, the electronic pen 10 must first request a new grid description before it can continue processing information. In such a situation, the electronic pen 10 requests a new grid description from the electronic pen client 22.

The electronic pen client 22 can be located in a mobile station 14, in a PDA, in a desktop or portable computer, in the electronic pen 10 itself, in a server somewhere on the Internet, or in another device. The electronic pen client 22 serves as the center of communications in the overall system 2. In particular, the electronic pen client 22 receives new grid requests and action requests from the electronic pen 10 and

responds to these requests by contacting an appropriate entity within the overall system 2 to properly respond to the request from the electronic pen 10. Furthermore, when the electronic pen 10 is being used in connection with a particular application, the electronic pen client 22 can  
5 store the application and/or any corresponding data received from the electronic pen 10 to facilitate processing and use of the application.

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10 The name server 26 is used for translating a detected position on the address pattern into a Uniform Resource Location (URL) associated with that position. Different portions of the address pattern are assigned to different applications. Neither the electronic pen 10 nor the electronic pen client 22, however, is aware of all of the  
15 different applications and the particular areas assigned to each application. Thus, when the electronic pen 10 detects a new or unknown position, it forwards the position information to the electronic pen client 22, which in turn sends the information to the name server 26.  
20 The name server 26 then identifies an application associated with the received position and retrieves a URL where a description of the particular application can be found. The retrieved URL can then be used by the

electronic pen client 22 to retrieve the application  
description.

As an alternative, the name server 26 can comprise a  
global name server that keeps track of a location, in the  
5 form of URLs to local name servers, where more information  
can be found about different addresses in the pattern.  
Similarly, each local name server can use other local name  
servers to obtain the necessary information, i.e., to  
convert a position into a URL where an application  
10 description can be found. At the lowest level, the local  
electronic pen client should know all the paper addresses  
that are within a specific application or applications.

There are some services that should be available in  
the overall system 2 for which it is inconvenient or not  
15 feasible to support such services in the electronic pen 10  
or the electronic pen client 22. In such a case, the base  
translator 28 can be used to support the services. For  
example, the base translator 28 might contain handwriting  
recognition software for converting pen actions into text  
20 or for converting pen actions into a predefined set of  
symbols. When such services are needed, the electronic  
pen client 22 can send a request to the base translator 28

along with the necessary data, and the base translator 28 can perform the requested service.

Another entity in the system 2 is a control node 24. The control node 24 is used for responding to actions in a standardized way. For example, the control node 24 can be used to respond to certain generic functions, such as "cancel" or "submit" functions, in a consistent manner without regard to the particular application that is currently active.

10 In addition, the control node 24 is used for creating streaming-like applications. For instance, some applications might require that the positions on the address pattern that are detected by the electronic pen 10 be immediately sent, upon detection, to the electronic pen client 22 for use by the application (i.e., the electronic pen 10 does not wait to transmit the position data until a complete stroke is detected or until a "send" field is touched). One example is an application that is used to control an industrial robot in a warehouse. In such a case, the application description that is loaded onto the electronic pen server 22 can include instructions that all positions be streamed to a control node 24. As a result, the control node 24 can receive the positions in real time

and can control the robot without waiting for the form  
(i.e., the current grid) to be completed. Thus, the  
control node 24 can perform a real-time translation from  
detected positions to a responsive action, such as moving  
5 an object (e.g., a robot, a valve, etc.) or controlling a  
process.

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10 The application server 30 is a regular web or  
wireless application protocol (WAP) server that supports  
an application associated with a particular area of the  
address pattern. The application server 30 stores an  
application description and provides the application  
description to the electronic pen client 22 upon request.  
In addition, the application server 30 receives input data  
from the electronic pen 10 via the electronic pen client  
15 22. For example, the application description might define  
a number of data entry areas on a form. Thus when data is  
entered on the form by the electronic pen 10, the data is  
received by the electronic pen client 22, converted into  
text using handwriting recognition software, and forwarded  
20 to the application server 30, which stores the data or  
otherwise processes the data in accordance with the  
function of the application.

Referring now to FIGURES 3 through 6 there are illustrated various examples of protocol stacks that can be used for communicating between the entities shown in FIGURE 2. Generally, however, such protocols apply  
5 however, only if the two communicating entities are implemented in different devices. If two or more entities are combined into one device, a proprietary protocol can be used to communicate between the entities. FIGURE 3 illustrates the protocol stacks that can be used in the  
10 case of local communications (e.g., using Bluetooth) between the electronic pen 10 and the electronic pen client 22. If, on the other hand, the electronic pen 10 and the electronic pen client 22 communicate with one another via an Internet connection, the protocol stacks  
15 depicted in FIGURE 4 will be used. FIGURE 5 illustrates a protocol stack for communicating between the electronic pen client and each of the supporting entities, such as the name server 26, the control node 24, the base translator 28, and the application server 30, when the  
20 electronic pen client 22 is not contained within a server on the Internet (e.g., such as when the electronic pen client 22 is located in a mobile phone 14). Finally,

FIGURE 6 depicts the protocol stacks that are used when the electronic pen client 22 is located on the Internet.

There are a number of procedures that can be used by the various entities in the system 2 to allow the system to operate properly. When the electronic pen 10 detects a position on the address pattern that is not within its currently loaded grid or when the electronic pen 10 has no currently loaded grid, the electronic pen 10 initiates a new grid procedure. The new grid procedure involves sending a new grid request object to the electronic pen client 22. The new grid request object contains the newly detected position, a description of the actions that the electronic pen 10 can natively support, and a description of the output signals that the electronic pen 10 supports. The reply to a new grid request object is a grid description, which can be provided by the electronic pen client 22 from its own internal memory or from the information provided by an application server 30. Generally, the electronic pen client 22 extracts the grid description from an application description received from the application server 30. The grid description should only contain action-field-types that the electronic pen 10 has indicated that it natively supports, which means that

the electronic pen client 22 in some cases should convert the extracted grid description into a format that the electronic pen 10 can understand.

5 In some situations, it may be necessary for the electronic pen 10 to unload its current grid at the request of the electronic pen client 22. In such a case, the electronic pen client 22 sends an empty grid description to the electronic pen 10, thereby causing the electronic pen 10 to unload its current grid. This can  
10 occur, for example, when a particular application is complete or when a new grid description request received from the electronic pen 10 cannot be fulfilled, such as when the position received from the electronic pen 10 is not registered in the name server 26.

15 Another similar message is the empty grid description with a grid exception. When the electronic pen 10 requests a new grid description from the electronic pen client 22, the electronic pen client 22 uses the detected position specified in the request to ask the name server  
20 26 for a URL where the application description can be found. If no URL is returned, the electronic pen client 22 can send an empty grid description with a grid exception to the electronic pen 10. The grid exception

comprises a rectangle or other shape indicating the area  
around the detected position where no registered  
applications can be found. Preferably, the indicated area  
is as large as possible so that the electronic pen 10  
5 and/or electronic pen client 22 know the extent of the  
surrounding area that is unassigned and do not have to  
repeatedly send requests to the name server 26. Thus, the  
empty grid description with a grid exception causes the  
electronic pen 10 to unload its current grid and also  
10 informs the electronic pen 10 of an area surrounding the  
detected position that can essentially be ignored because  
its is not associated with any application.

The procedure that is used when the electronic pen 10  
detects a new position is a find application description  
15 location procedure. This procedure is used by the  
electronic pen client 22 to translate a detected position  
received from the electronic pen 10 into a URL where a  
description of an application corresponding to that  
position can be found. The procedure involves sending a  
20 request from the electronic pen client 22 to the name  
server 26 containing identification of the detected  
position. The name server 26 responds by sending a reply  
to the electronic pen client 22 containing a URL where an

application description can be found or, if the detected position is not registered in the name server 26, containing an indication that no associated application is known to exist.

5           Once the electronic pen client 22 knows the URL where an application description can be found, the electronic pen client 22 can initiate a get application description procedure, which allows the electronic pen client 22 to retrieve the application description from the application  
10   server 30. In particular, the electronic pen client 22 sends an application description request containing a unique ID for the requesting electronic pen 10 and/or electronic pen client 22 to the application server 30 located at the URL address provided by the name server 26.  
15   In response, the application server 30 provides an application description object to the electronic pen client 22, which loads the application onto the electronic pen client 22. The application description object is similar to an HTML form with some additions and  
20   modifications.

Furthermore, the application description object can be sent from the application server 30 to the electronic pen client 22 in response to a submitted form (i.e., a

submission of one completed form might automatically  
result in a new form being loaded onto the electronic pen  
client 22). A related procedure is the application submit  
procedure, which is used by the electronic pen client 22  
5 when the user of the electronic pen 10 selects a "submit"  
field in a form. In response to the selection of the  
"submit" field, the electronic pen client 22 will submit  
the form content in accordance with instructions received  
in the application description. Typically, the electronic  
10 pen client 22 will submit the form content, in the same  
way as a regular web browser, to a URL specified in a form  
tag of the application description.

When an action that can be handled by the electronic  
pen 10 itself is generated, an action procedure is  
15 initiated by the electronic pen 10 to send an action  
request object to the electronic pen client 22. If the  
electronic pen client 22 cannot translate the action into  
a field value itself, the electronic pen client 22 further  
forwards the request to a base translator 28 for  
20 translating the action into a field value. In response to  
the action request object, an action reply object is sent  
from the electronic pen client 22 to the electronic pen  
10. The action reply object contains output information

that indicates to the electronic pen 10 which outputs  
signals to use. The output information, however, cannot  
be of type that the electronic pen 10 has previously  
indicated that it does not support. In some instances, the  
5 action reply object might contain a new grid description.  
In such a case the electronic pen 10 will unload its  
current grid description and load the new grid  
description. Similarly, if the action reply object  
contains an empty grid description, the electronic pen 10  
10 will simply unload its current grid description.

The action request object is also sometimes used to  
specify actions that should be processed by the control  
node 24. In this instance, the electronic pen client 22  
initiates a control procedure by forwarding the received  
15 action to the appropriate control node 24. As a result,  
the control node 24 sends an action reply object to the  
electronic pen client 22.

The operation of the electronic pen 10 will now be  
discussed in greater detail. Each electronic pen 10 has a  
20 unique pen ID, which is sent to the application server 30  
when an application description is requested. The  
electronic pen ID allows the application to identify the  
particular user that is using the application and to

distinguish between multiple concurrent users of the same application, such as when different electronic pens 10 are being used in connection with separate sheets of paper that each contain the same portion of the address pattern.

5 Referring now to FIGURE 7, there is illustrated a block diagram of the electronic pen logic that handles positions, strokes, actions, and grid descriptions for the electronic pen 10. The electronic pen 10 includes a control block 32 for controlling the operation of the  
10 electronic pen 10. A grid description block 34 represents a memory location that stores a current grid description. At any given time, the electronic pen 10 can be in either of two modes. In a first mode, a grid description is loaded, while in a second mode, the grid description block  
15 34 is not loaded with a current grid description.

As the electronic pen 10 moves across an address pattern, the electronic pen 10 periodically (e.g., every 1/100 of a second) detects a position by detecting all of the dots within, for example, a 3mm by 3mm area. Each  
20 detected position is forwarded (as indicated at 36) to a position first in first out (FIFO) block 38, which acts as a buffer for temporarily storing the detected positions.

The clocking of the position FIFO block 38 is controlled by the control block 32 (as indicated at 40).

The detected position is fed from the position FIFO block 38 (as indicated at 42) to an in grid detector 44.

5 The in grid detector 44 retrieves data from the grid description block 34 (as indicated at 46) and determines whether the received position is within the loaded grid description. If not, the in grid detector 44 notifies the control block 32, which in turn initiates a request for a  
10 new grid. When the detected position is within the current grid, the position is then sent (as indicated at 50) from the in grid detector 44 to a stroke engine 52. The stroke engine 52 converts the received positions into strokes, which are then sent (as indicated at 54) to an  
15 action engine 56. A complete stroke is created when the electronic pen 10 is lifted from the paper or when it moves outside of the grid field where the stroke began. Finally, the action engine 56 converts the received stroke into an action that can be sent to the electronic pen  
20 client 22. By using grid action-field-types, the action engine knows which type of action to produce for a specific grid field.

Referring now to FIGURE 8, there is illustrated a block diagram of a state machine for the control block 32 shown in FIGURE 7. In this figure, events are indicated in capital letters, while tasks associated with the event are depicted in brackets. The process starts at step 60 with a start up event 62, which causes the position FIFO block 38 to begin receiving detected positions.

Initially, the electronic pen 10 is in a no grid loaded state 64, which means that the electronic pen 10 does not have a grid loaded in the grid description block 34. As a result, the control block 32 generates an outside grid indication 66, thereby causing the electronic pen 10 to send the request for a new grid description to the electronic pen client 22 (i.e., in accordance with the new grid procedure) and to stop the FIFO buffer 38. At this point, the electronic pen 10 enters a waiting for grid state 68.

Once the new grid has been received (as indicated at 70), the control block 32 moves to a grid loaded state 72, at which time the new grid is loaded into the grid description block 34 and the position FIFO block 38 resumes operation. On the other hand, if no grid is received (as indicated at 74), at least a portion of the

positions stored in the FIFO buffer 38 are erased. Which  
part of the FIFO buffer to erase is determined by the grid  
exception area, if any, in the received empty grid  
description. Accordingly, all positions stored in the  
5 FIFO buffer 38 that are within the grid exception area  
should be erased. If no grid exception is received, the  
stroke associated with the position is erased. In  
addition, the FIFO block 38 resumes operation and the  
control block 32 moves into the no grid loaded state 64.

10 When the control block 32 is in the grid loaded state  
72, a current grid is loaded in the grid description block  
34. While the control block 32 remains in this state 72,  
the position FIFO block 38 continues to receive detected  
positions and passes them on to the stroke engine 52 and  
15 action engine 56. Actions produced by the action engine  
56 are sent (as indicated at 58) to the electronic pen  
client 22 (i.e., in accordance with the action procedure  
described above).

At some point, an outside grid indication 74 may be  
20 received by the control block 32 from the in grid detector  
44. The outside grid event 74 causes the FIFO block 38 to  
stop generating new positions. In addition, the  
electronic pen 10 enters a flushing stroke and action

state 76 wherein the strokes that are currently in the stroke engine 52 and the actions that are currently in the action engine 56 are flushed to the electronic pen client 22. Once the stroke engine 52 and action engine 56 have been fully flushed (as indicated at 78), the electronic pen 10 sends a request for a new grid to the electronic pen client 22 and unloads the current grid. The control block 32 then moves back into the waiting for grid state 68.

As a general matter, the electronic pen 10 may be capable of supporting various different types of output, including audio, such as warning tones; visual, such as a flashing light; tactile, such as vibration; and/or ink. In some cases, it might be desirable to allow the user of the electronic pen 10 to turn off the ink of the pen 10, such as when the electronic pen is being used on a portion of the address pattern that is public or shared or when the user wants to be able to reuse the current sheet of paper.

The electronic pen client 22 will now be described in greater detail. Generally, the electronic pen client 22 is analogous to a regular web browser. It is responsible for loading applications from application servers 30 and for handling input from the electronic pen 10.

Preferably, the electronic pen client 22 is located in a separate device from the electronic pen 10 itself. This is because it is desirable to minimize the size and power supply requirements of the electronic pen 10, which will likely be adversely affected by the processing resources and memory necessary to support the functions of the electronic pen client 22.

Referring now to FIGURE 9, there is illustrated a block diagram of a state machine for the electronic pen client 22. Initially, the electronic pen client 22 is in a no application loaded state 80. The electronic pen client 22 recognizes only one signal when in this state 80, namely a new grid request from the electronic pen 10. Such a request causes a load grid indication event 82. The electronic pen client 22 responds by sending a request to the name server 26 to translate a position contained within the new grid request into a URL where the application description can be found (i.e., in accordance with the find application location procedure). Next, the electronic pen client 22 enters a waiting for application description URL state 84. If no URL for the application description can be found (as indicated at 86), the electronic pen client 22 sends a new grid reply to the

electronic pen 10, wherein the reply contains an empty grid description with a grid exception. As a result, the electronic pen client 22 returns to the no application loaded state 80.

5           If a URL for the application description is received from the name server 26 (as indicated at 88), the electronic pen client 22 sends a request to the application server 30 to retrieve the application description (i.e., in accordance with the get application  
10           description procedure). Accordingly, the electronic pen client 22 enters a waiting for application description state 90.

          If the electronic pen client 22 does not receive an application description from the application server 30 (as  
15           indicated at 92), a new grid reply is sent by the electronic pen client 22 to the electronic pen 10 wherein the reply contains an empty grid. Thus, the electronic pen client 22 returns to the no application loaded state 80. If, however, the electronic pen client 22 does  
20           receive an application description from the application server 30 (as indicated at 94), the electronic pen client 22 sends a new grid reply to the electronic pen 10 containing a new grid description, and the electronic pen

client 22 loads the application in its memory. In addition, the electronic pen client 22 moves into an application loaded state 96.

5 In the application loaded state 96, five types of actions can be received by the electronic pen client 22 from the electronic pen 10. First, a received action can include a request that the electronic pen client 22 cannot handle itself, in which case the electronic pen client 22 will send the action to the base translator 28 (as  
10 indicated at 98). The electronic pen client 22 then moves into a waiting for response from the base translator state 100. Once a base translator response 102 is received by the electronic pen client 22, the electronic pen client 22 updates a current form or other data associated with the  
15 currently loaded application and sends an action reply to the electronic pen 10 with appropriate output information.

Another type of action that the electronic pen client 22 can receive from the electronic pen 10 is a request that should be forwarded to a control node 24. In such a  
20 case, the action is sent to a control URL specified in the application description (as indicated at 104), and the electronic pen client 22 enters a waiting for response from the control state 106. Once a response is received

from the control (as indicated at 108), the electronic pen client 22 sends an action reply to the electronic pen 10 with appropriate output information.

5 A third type of action is a submit form request, in response to which the electronic pen client 22 will submit the current form to the application server 30 that is identified by the URL in the application description (as indicated at 110). The electronic pen client 22 then enters a waiting for response from the application server

10 state 112. If the application server 30 responds by sending an empty application description to the electronic pen client 22 (as indicated at 114), the current application is unloaded from the electronic pen client 22 and an action reply is sent to the electronic pen 10 with an empty grid.

15 As a result, the electronic pen client 22 returns to the no application loaded state 80. On the other hand, if the application server 30 responds with a non-empty application description, the old application is unloaded from the electronic pen client 22, the new

20 application description is parsed and loaded in the electronic pen client 22, an action reply is sent to the electronic pen 10 with a new grid description and with

appropriate output information, and finally the electronic pen client 22 returns to the application loaded state 96.

5 A fourth type of action that can be received by the electronic pen client 22 from the electronic pen 10 is a request to load a new grid. This action occurs, for example, when a position outside of the current grid is detected by the electronic pen 10. When a new grid request is received, the electronic pen client 22 sends a request to the name server 26 (as indicated at 116) and  
10 the electronic pen client 22 returns to the waiting for application description URL state 84.

Finally, a fifth type of action that can be received by the electronic pen client 22 is an action that the electronic pen client 22 can handle itself, in which case  
15 the electronic pen client 22 updates the current form and sends an action reply to the electronic pen 10 with appropriate output information (as indicated at 118). The electronic pen client 22 then remains in the application loaded state 96. One type of action that the electronic  
20 pen client 22 might be able to handle itself is a local application. For example, the electronic pen client 22 might be capable of performing certain basic functions that are defined by a local application. Thus, when the

electronic pen client 22 receives a new grid request, the position associated with the new grid request can be analyzed to determine if it corresponds to a local application. If so, the electronic pen client 22 can load  
5 the application description from its local memory, send a new grid description to the electronic pen 10 without having to communicate with the name server 26 or the application server 30.

Another action that might be handled locally by the  
10 electronic pen client 22 relates to the selection of fields within a form. When the electronic pen client 22 receives an action, the field that corresponds to that action receives focus. When this occurs, the electronic pen client 22 might display the field's value on its  
15 display or output the value by audio. In addition, the electronic pen client 22 might allow the user to edit the value of the field by means other than the electronic pen 10. Yet another type of action that might be handled by the electronic pen client 22 itself are actions that  
20 relate to a clipboard function. When a "copy" field is selected, the value of the field that had focus at the time the copy field was selected is transferred to the clipboard. Similarly, when a "paste" field is selected,

the value stored in the clipboard is transferred to the field that had focus at the time the paste field was selected.

Referring now to FIGURES 10A through 10C, there is shown, by way of example, a message flow and signaling diagram illustrating the operation of the electronic pen system 2 depicted in and discussed in connection with FIGURE 2. Initially, the electronic pen 10 detects a first position on the address pattern at step 120 (e.g., at a location on a sheet of paper designated for composing and sending emails). At this stage, it is assumed that the electronic pen 10 is in a no grid loaded state. Thus, in response to the detection of the first position, the electronic pen 10 sends a new grid request 122, which contains the detected position information, to the electronic pen client 22. As a result, the electronic pen client 22 sends an application location request 124 containing the detected position information to the name server 26, at step 126. The name server 26 translates the detected position into a URL where an application description that corresponds to the detected position can be found (e.g., a URL address for a server containing an email application), and returns an application location

reply 128 containing the retrieved URL to the electronic pen client 22.

5 The electronic pen client 22 then sends an application description request 130, which contains the unique pen ID for the electronic pen 10, to the application server 30. The application server 30 retrieves the application description at step 132 and sends an application description reply 134 containing the retrieved application description to the electronic pen client 22. The electronic pen client 22 then parses and stores the application description at step 136. This step further involves generating a current grid description from the application description and sending the grid description to the electronic pen 10 in a new grid reply 10 138. The electronic pen 10 stores the received grid description at step 140 and resumes processing of the detected positions. Using the detected positions and the information in the grid description (e.g., so that the electronic pen 10 knows which fields of the email form are 15 being filled in), the electronic pen 10 generates strokes at step 142 and generates actions at step 144 using the stroke engine 52 and action engine 56 shown in FIGURE 7.

Each time an action is generated that cannot be handled by the electronic pen 10 itself, an action request 146 containing a description of the action is sent from the electronic pen 10 to the electronic pen client 22. At this point, the electronic pen client 22 should determine what type of action has been received so that it can respond to the action in an appropriate manner. First, it is determined whether the action requires the attention of, or otherwise should be processed in accordance with, a local application at step 148. Very basic applications or frequently used applications (e.g., delete entered text), for example, might be stored locally to avoid having to contact another entity. In such a case, the electronic pen client 22 retrieves the local application at step 150 and sends an action reply 152, which can contain a new grid description or other appropriate information.

However, if it is determined at step 148 that the received action does not relate to a local application, the process continues at step 154 where it is determined whether the received action requires processing by an external translator (e.g., handwriting recognition). If so, an action request 156 containing a description of the action is sent by the electronic pen client 22 to the base

translator 28. The base translator 28 processes the  
action at step 158 and sends an action reply 160  
containing output information responsive to the received  
action (e.g., text corresponding to written characters) to  
5 the electronic pen client 22, which can forward the output  
information to the electronic pen 10 in an action reply  
162, if necessary.

If it is determined at step 154 that the received  
action does not require processing by an external  
10 translator, it is next determined whether the action  
relates to a control application at step 164. If so, an  
action request 166 containing a description of the action  
is sent by the electronic pen client 22 to the control  
server 24. The control server 24 processes the received  
15 action at step 168 and, if a response is necessary,  
returns output information responsive to the received  
action in an action reply 170, which is forwarded from the  
electronic pen client 22 to the electronic pen 10 in an  
action reply 172.

20 Assuming that it is determined at step 164 that the  
received action does not relate to a control function, it  
is next determined whether the action comprises a request  
to submit a form at step 174 (e.g., a selection of a

TOEFO"THZ60  
10001

"send" area on the email form). If so, an action request 176 containing the data entered onto the form is sent by the electronic pen client 22 to the application server 30. The application server 30 processes the form at step 178 and sends an action reply 180 containing a new application description (or an empty application description) to the electronic pen client 22. The electronic pen client 22 parses and stores the new application description at step 182 and generates a new grid description from the newly received application description. The electronic pen client 22 then sends an action reply 184 containing the new grid description. Although not illustrated in the figure, the electronic pen 10 will typically respond to the receipt of a new grid description by unloading its current grid description and loading the new grid description into its memory.

At some point, it is assumed that the electronic pen 10 detects a position that is outside of the currently loaded grid at step 186. In response to such an event, the electronic pen 10 sends a new grid request 188 containing the newly detected position data to the electronic pen client 22. In response, the electronic pen client 22 again generates an application location request

190 containing the detected position data and sends the  
request to the name server 26. The name server 26  
determines whether a URL for an application description  
that corresponds to the newly detected position is  
5 available at step 192.

If so, the name server 26 sends an application  
location reply 194 containing a retrieved URL to the  
electronic pen client 22, which in turn sends an  
application description request 196 containing the unique  
10 pen ID for the electronic pen 10 to the application server  
30 at the identified URL address, just as previously  
discussed in connection with messages 128 and 130. In  
this case, however, it is assumed that the application  
server 30 determines that the requested application  
15 description is unavailable at step 198. As a result, the  
application server 30 sends an application description  
reply to the electronic pen client 22 containing an empty  
application description. In response to the receipt of an  
empty application description, the electronic pen client  
20 22 unloads the current application at step 202 and sends a  
new grid reply 204 containing an empty grid description to  
the electronic pen 10. The electronic pen 10 responds to

the receipt of the empty grid description by unloading the current grid description at step 206.

Another possibility is that the name server 26 determines at step 192 that a URL corresponding to the detected position is not available. In this situation, the name server 26 sends an application location reply 208 to the electronic pen client 22. The reply 208 may simply be empty to indicate that a URL is not available. Preferably, however, the reply 208 contains a grid exception defining the largest area possible around the detected position for which there is no corresponding URL. In response to the reply 208, the electronic pen client 22 sends a new grid reply 210 containing an empty grid description with a grid exception. Upon receiving the reply 210, the electronic pen 10 unloads the current grid description at step 212. Furthermore, assuming that the electronic pen 10 receives and recognizes the grid exception information, the electronic pen 10 may subsequently be able to determine that certain detected positions on the address pattern are not associated with any application without having to send a request to the name server 26 or the application server 30.

5 The electronic reading device system 2 makes it possible to send a digital copy of what is written on a piece of paper or a whiteboard, for example, as an email, fax, or SMS. This is simply performed by writing the message on the specially formatted paper 12. To help users trust this system and its applications, it is desirable that the user receive feedback of what and how well the user's notes or other input have been transferred to a PC, telephone, server, or other destination. The more feedback the user gets, the higher quality will be perceived. By using an electronic pen 10 with a writing functionality (e.g., an ink cartridge), the user gets direct feedback of what he or she has written on the paper (i.e., because of the ink that is left on the paper). It is, however, also desirable that the user gets feedback when the document or notes have been electronically sent and how they will look at the receiving end.

20 Another aspect of the invention is that the user will frequently want to retrieve information, such as a phone number from a mobile phone or an email address from the Internet, as the user writes on the paper 12. This type of feedback can also be given on the display of a mobile phone, a PDA, or a PC.

By introducing a "Help" or "Information Retrieval" button on the paper 12, the user can selectively choose when he or she wants the mobile phone, PDA, or PC to display the help text or other information that relates to the functions that are built into the paper 12. One can alternatively download the help information from the Internet to the user for a certain paper application (e.g., an income declaration form).

Using the above-mentioned "Help" button, one can download information about the paper application from a server on the Internet to a client located either in an electronic pen, mobile phone, PDA, or PC when the user checks a help button or field on a formatted paper. This will provide the user of the electronic pen 10 with help and information feedback related to each paper application on a display screen. Accordingly, a user of the electronic reading device system 2 can receive help or information retrieval while using the electronic pen 10.

Referring now to FIGURES 1 and 2, an illustrative example of the invention will now be described. As a user writes information with the electronic pen 10 on a formatted paper 12, the positions detected by the electronic pen 10 can be forwarded to the electronic pen

client 22, which can be located in a mobile phone 14,  
computer, PDA, electronic pen, or other electronic device,  
and converted into an electronic textual representation of  
the handwritten information. The electronic textual  
5 representation can then be displayed on a display screen  
of a mobile phone 14, computer, PDA, or other device  
including a display screen. Typically, such a display of  
information would occur after selecting an appropriate  
field (e.g., a "Display Writing" field) on the formatted  
10 surface. As a result, the user can review and/or confirm  
the entered information. In an alternative embodiment, a  
user can use the electronic pen 10 to select a "help"  
field on a formatted surface that is associated with a  
particular application. In response, the electronic pen  
15 client 22 could retrieve help information from a local  
memory or from an application server 30 and display the  
information on a display screen.

Although various preferred embodiments of the method  
and apparatus of the present invention have been  
20 illustrated in the accompanying Drawings and described in  
the foregoing Detailed Description, it is understood that  
the invention is not limited to the embodiments disclosed,  
but is capable of numerous rearrangements, modifications,

and substitutions without departing from the spirit of the invention as set forth and defined by the following claims. Furthermore, it shall be understood that the terms "comprises" and "comprising," when used in the  
5 foregoing Detailed Description and the following claims, specifies the presence of stated features, elements, steps, or components but does not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, elements, steps, components, or groups thereof.